

For general release

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| REPORT TO: | Streets Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee 16 March 2021 |
| SUBJECT: | CROYDON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Heather Cheesbrough – Director of Planning and Strategic Transport Steve Dennington, Head of Spatial Planning |
| CABINET MEMBER: | Councillor Oliver Lewis, Cabinet Member for Culture and Regeneration |
| PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING: | Councillor Oliver Lewis, Cabinet Member for Culture and Regeneration |

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:

The relevant sections of the Corporate Plan to planning - 'what does success look like' and 'what will we do' have been identified and informed the Local Plan Review vision. Going forward, this will allow future planning policies to align with the Corporate Plan vision and actions.

[Corporate Plan for Croydon 2018-2022](#)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Local Plan Review is funded in full from a dedicated Local Plan reserve budget.

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| ORIGIN OF ITEM: | This item form part of the Sub-Committee's work programme. |
| BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE: | To consider the work done on the Council's review of the Local Plan |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an opportunity for Members of the Committee to inform and consider the work that has been undertaken on the Council's review of the Local Plan 2018 and provide feedback that will be fed into the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) consultation document that is being drafted.
- 1.2 The main aim of the Local Plan Review is to set the framework for the sustainable growth of the borough for the next twenty years, including addressing the need to help deliver more high quality housing and affordable housing, whilst developing vibrant places to live, work, visit and socialise. With the adoption of

the London Plan, Croydon has a housing target of 41,800 new homes between 2019 and 2039. A key stage of the work on the Local Plan review was the Issues and Options consultation in late 2019, which presented three spatial strategies. Work continued on the Local Plan Review until November 2020, but with the Council issuing a Section 114 notice the Local Plan Review was paused. Work on the Local Plan Review will recommence mid March 2021. The next stage, that has been partially completed, is developing a Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) draft of the Local Plan. This version will address the new London Plan, national legislative and policy changes since 2018, address the causes of climate change associated with planning, direct sustainable growth across the borough, contribute to meeting housing need and support economic growth, especially taking account of the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

- 1.3 The Local Plan review has also identified the need to include and has developed three additional chapters about strategic transformation areas for;
Purley Way
North End Quarter
Brighton Mainline Upgrade.
- 1.4 The Local Plan Review has developed proposed policy updates (with varying scales of change) for each thematic policy areas including; housing, affordable housing, housing design, urban design, heritage and local character, employment, retail, community facilities – health and education, community facilities – social infrastructure, environment and climate change, green grid, transport and parking. Additional evidence has been assembled to support the development of updated policies.
- 1.5 The 16 Places of Croydon will change depending on their local character, their accessibility to services and public transport, their heritage assets and the ability to deliver sustainable growth with the required physical and social infrastructure. The strategy set out in the Proposed Submission document details the vision for the 16 Places as well as the proposed growth scenario.
- 1.6 The proposed changes developed to date are summarised in this report. The input of this Committee is welcomed at this stage. The information in this report is presented as work in progress. The Proposed Submission document is anticipated to be considered by Cabinet in June 2021 and approval to publish for six weeks consultation will be sought. All representations received at this stage will inform the examination in public before a Secretary of State Planning Inspector into the soundness of the Local Plan Review for adoption.
- 1.7 The Local Plan is a statutory document as it forms the basis on which planning applications should be determined unless material consideration indicate otherwise. Therefore, it is a statutory requirement for a Council to produce an up to date Local Plan.
- 1.8 The Local Plan Review is being developed ahead of implementation of the government's proposed changes to the national planning system as set out in the recent published Planning for the future White Paper. The full implications of these changes on the plan making system and the resources necessary will be known as the government progresses the detail of this legislation.

2. CROYDON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Background

- 2.1 Croydon needs to review the existing Croydon Local Plan 2018 to rise to the challenges facing the borough and its communities over the next 20 years, and ensure general conformity with the New London Plan. Planning is critical to ensuring that Croydon meets the needs of all its residents, businesses and visitors. This Local Plan Review sets out to consider how Croydon might contribute to meeting its own housing needs, including the need for affordable homes; whilst tackling the causes of climate change in the borough, supporting economic growth and ensuring it is developing vibrant places for people to live, work and visit
- 2.2 It should be noted that during the course of the review of the Local Plan the New London Plan has been going through various stages of consideration and was adopted on 2nd March 2021. The Local Plan review took account of the emerging London Plan, including possibly the most significant change post submission, which was to reduce the overall housing requirement, but to fix a small sites target for each borough. The final version of the London Plan that was adopted on 2nd March 2021 needs to be reflected in the Proposed Submission Local Plan Review. This is essential as it is a statutory requirement to produce a Local Plan in general conformity with the London Plan.

Strategic Option

- 2.3 During the Issues and Options consultation stage three strategic spatial options were set out. Each of the three options proposed a proportion of homes to be built in each of the boroughs 16 places based on differing criteria linked to achieving sustainable growth. The third option which proposed strategic residential led development in the Green Belt is no longer needed due to the reduced New London Plan housing target for the Borough. Taking into account the consultation responses, the statutory Sustainability Appraisal and evidence, a proposed strategic spatial option has been developed and will be included the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan Review.
- 2.4 The proposed strategic spatial option continues with significant development in the Croydon Opportunity Area, development allocations elsewhere in the borough, a step change in housing supply along the Purley Way and continued development of windfall sites. Additional work on the quarter of housing supply to be delivered through windfalls, particularly suburban intensification is underway. This reflects the New London Plan policy on small sites. Therefore, the borough is required to accommodate a minimum of 641 units per annum from small sites, which should be in locations that have good access to a centre, social and physical infrastructure and reasonable sustainable transport. Therefore, a review of the Local Plan 2018's focused intensification areas is underway and more detailed policy is proposed to more clearly define what level of suburban intensification is planned for each of the 16 Places. An element of the Council's housing land supply being from small sites is a requirement of both national and London Plan policy.

- 2.5 A quantity of housing per Place will be included in the Local Plan Review based on this proposed spatial strategy outlined above. The figures are subject to updating, but the figures shown in the Issues and Options consultation show how distribution can be undertaken across the 16 Places (the Issues and Options consultation is a background document to this report).

Transformation Areas.

- 2.6 The Local Plan review has also identified the need to include and is developing three additional chapters relating to strategic transformation areas, which for different reasons will need a comprehensive approach to plan for these areas. These will be in new chapters, which will sit above the 16 Places while the policy approach is delivered over the life of the plan. These areas are summarised as follows;

The Purley Way.

- 2.7 Forming a key part of the Proposed Submission strategic spatial option, the Purley Way transformation area policies and allocations will facilitate considerable growth in residential, mixed use (outside the Strategic Employment Locations) and industrial intensification development to support economic growth along the Purley Way. Alongside the development of the Local Plan Review chapter a masterplan for the Purley Way has been developed too, which will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on adoption of the Local Plan Review. The Purley Way Masterplan has just concluded its consultation. It should be noted that the policies for the area are developed to compliment the Croydon Opportunity Area and will enable the delivery of a significant amount of housing, whilst protecting and proposing the intensification of protected industrial designations.

The North End Quarter

- 2.8 The North End Quarter covers the area that forms the retail core of the Croydon Opportunity Area. The transformation policies update the Opportunity Area Framework for the area and provide a framework for the transformation of this area as a destination to suit the modern needs of residents and providing a vibrant and successful centre.

Brighton Main Line Upgrade and East Croydon Station

- 2.9 The Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS), is the largest and most complex part of Network Rail's longer-term Brighton Main Line upgrade project. CARS would remove the most operationally challenging bottleneck on Britain's railway network, located in the 'Selhurst triangle', the junctions north of East Croydon. A new station and station square is proposed for East Croydon as part of the project. East Croydon station must remain a sustainable transport node, providing access to the train, tram, bus, walking and cycling networks. The transformation chapter will set the policy context to inform the Transport Works Act Order (the route Network Rail will seek consent for the project), especially supporting the project and setting the placemaking and renewal context for the Station Square and Station Building.

Policy Topic Area Changes

- 2.10 The following changes are proposed in the Local Plan Review to support the delivery of the strategy, update the plan consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and New London Plan and address environmental and climate change issues.

Housing - including Affordable Housing

- 2.11 To inform the housing policies a Strategic Housing Market Assessment has been produced which sets out the quantity and type of housing needed over the 20 year plan period. The evidence that identifies that Croydon's population is gradually getting older and household sizes are getting smaller. Open market housing (both private rented and for sale) is getting less and less affordable for many households in the borough. The report concludes that 2,254 affordable rented homes a year would be needed in Croydon to meet the need of lower income households for housing.
- 2.12 The policies will be updated recognising the housing crisis and the need to encourage significant housing delivery, especially affordable homes. However, the affordable housing will be in alignment with the New London Plan. As there is an emphasis on additional housing delivery to address this there will be additional housing design guidance.

Employment and Retail

- 2.13 Subject to aligning these policies with the New London Plan and the NPPF, the review addresses the need to respond to the changing function and use of all tiers of centres. Recognising the role of Croydon Metropolitan Centre as the largest town centre and further clarity has been developed around the town centre hierarchy which has been simplified. The changes to the use classes order in September 2020 has been reflected, which in simple terms introduced a blanket use class E for town centre uses. This will result in there being no requirement for main and secondary retail frontages. The Local Plan 2018 had sought to support and strengthen the role of District and Local centres and some minor policy changes are needed in to improve these in the current retail climate. Additional policies have been developed supporting the creative economy, affordable workspaces and providing benefits to the local workforce. The Local Plan plays a key role in economic growth at any time so it will be a key tool for the post Covid recovery. The revised policies will address this and the Council's post Covid recovery strategy and approach will be incorporated into policies. The Local Plan Review is informed by an updated Employment Needs Assessment, which shows that there is a need for employment land and protection, so existing policies will remain unchanged in their thrust which seeks to achieve this and encourage intensification.

Community Facilities

- 2.14 These policies do not need significant change as they recognise and plan for the need to provide appropriate community facilities, such as education, health, religious, sporting, cultural and creative spaces, for all residents and visitors of

Croydon. However, due to the increased housing delivery the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informs these policies is updated.

Transport

- 2.15 As Croydon grows, we need to reduce the amount of private car use, traffic and congestion and resultant pollution in our streets in accordance with the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Changes to the transportation policies aim to address the climate emergency, support the Mayor's Transport Strategy and enable growth in the borough.

Green Grid

- 2.16 Reflecting the pressure that increased housing development would place on the green grid and the need to address the climate emergency the Local Plan Review is an opportunity to strengthen these policies. This is supported by the revisions to the NPPF and the New London Plan policies.
- 2.17 Following on from the Planning Inspector removing Local Green Spaces in in the Local Plan 2018, a consultation and evidence gathering exercise has been undertaken to support the introduction of Local Green Spaces as part of the Local Plan Review.

Collaboration and Consultation

- 2.18 The Local Plan Review has been approached as a collaborative project building on the 16 Places approach in the Local Plan 2018, which has been adopted corporately. The project is led by the Spatial Planning Service who facilitate input and feedback in the policy review from colleagues across the Council with significant input from Development Management, Strategic Transport and Regeneration. Partners such as the GLA, TfL, NHS and Network Rail have also been meaningfully engaged. Neighbouring local authorities have been engaged to develop a proposed strategic spatial option and meet the statutory requirements under the Duty to Cooperate. A cross party Joint Member Working Group has also informed the Local Plan Review and provided advice to the Cabinet Member.
- 2.19 For the public consultation a broader and more inclusive form of consultation was developed at the Issues and Options stage, which was effective in encouraging responses from a wide range of people and stakeholders. The format of the Urban Room, roving pop up displays, focus groups, youth involvement and a permanent Urban Room display in the Whitgift was particularly successful. Indeed the Urban Room was commended in the Planning Awards 2020 and shortlisted for a NLA Award. The Issues and Options Consultation was also supported by an independently facilitated Planning for Real exercise on the proposed strategic spatial options with community groups and resident associations', which was helpful in rehearsing the considerations for arriving at a proposed strategic spatial option.

Resources and the way forward

- 2.20 The Local Plan Review project is largely resourced from the Spatial Planning Service. The resource level is based on existing statutory requirements and

timetables. However, proposals set out in the governments recently published Planning for the future White Paper would increase the level of resource required with increased emphasis on design and setting design codes for each type of growth area.

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APPENDICES: None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Local Plan 2018 - <https://new.croydon.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/planning/planning-policy/croydons-development-plan/local-plan-2018>

The consultation documents and evidence supporting the Local Plan review and the previous round of Issues and Options consultation are relevant documents.

They are located on the [Councils Local Plan Review Page](#)